

Statistics Weekly

Thursday, 22 April 1993



statistics

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Trend unemployment falling

The provisional trend estimate of unemployment fell in March 1993 for the third successive month, after increasing since November 1989. Provisional trend estimates of employment also increased for the third successive month, with the trend in full-time employment now increasing steadily. The trend estimate of the unemployment rate fell to 11.0 per cent, and the trend participation rate was steady at 62.6 per cent.

Employment

The March 1993 seasonally adjusted estimate of employed persons was 7,727,300, an increase of 68,100 since February. Full-time employment increased by 47,100 to 5,940,900. Male full-time employment rose by 24,400 to 4,017,500 and for female full-time employment there was a similar increase of 22,700 to 1,923,300. Male part-time employment rose to 446,000, an increase of 19,100, and female part-time employment was steady at 1,340,400.

Unemployment

The seasonally adjusted estimate of unemployed persons in March 1993 fell to 941,300, a decrease of 15,000 since February. Male unemployment fell by 13,700 to 574,700, reflecting a fall of 16,600 males seeking full-time work and a rise of 3,000 in those seeking part-time jobs. The estimate of the number of females seeking full-time work rose by 4,900 and female part-time unemployment fell by 6,200, resulting in female unemployment falling to 366,600.

Unemployment rate

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in March was 10.9 per cent, a fall of 0.2 percentage points since February. The male unemployment rate fell 0.3 percentage points to 11.4 per cent, and the female unemployment rate fell 0.1 percentage points to 10.1 per cent.

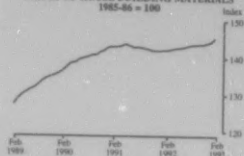
Participation rate

The seasonally adjusted estimate of the labour force participation rate was 62.7 per cent in March, an increase of 0.3 percentage points since February. The participation rate for males increased by 0.4 percentage points to 73.9 per cent, and for females, the participation rate rose to 51.8 per cent, an increase of 0.3 percentage points.

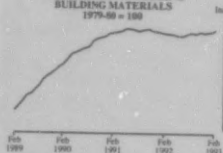
LABOUR FORCE ESTIMATES
Seasonally adjusted

	Employed			Unemployment rate — per cent —	Participation rate
	Full-time workers	Part-time workers	Total		
	— '000 —				
1992					
October	5,862.3	1,842.3	7,704.6	972.9	63.1
November	5,853.8	1,796.8	7,652.6	971.2	62.6
December	5,870.4	1,793.3	7,663.7	973.6	62.7
1993					
January	5,903.7	1,822.3	7,726.1	954.0	62.9
February	5,893.8	1,765.4	7,659.2	956.3	62.4
March	5,940.9	1,786.4	7,727.3	941.3	62.7

PRICES OF HOUSE BUILDING MATERIALS
1985-86 = 100



PRICES OF NON-DWELLING
BUILDING MATERIALS
1979-80 = 100



Building materials prices rise

Prices of materials used in house building increased by 0.8 per cent from January to February 1993, while prices of materials used in other forms of building increased by 0.3 per cent.

Both figures were the highest monthly increases for well over a year, but the annual change in these series remains at modest levels.

From February 1992 to February 1993 prices increased by 2.5 per cent for materials used in house building and by 0.6 per cent for materials used in other forms of building.

Higher prices for structural timber, in particular softwoods, was the main contributor to the overall increase in building material prices in February.

PRICES OF BUILDING MATERIALS, FEBRUARY 1993

City	Percentage change			
	House building		Other than house building	
	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Sydney	0.7	1.6	0.2	-1.0
Melbourne	1.2	4.1	0.3	2.1
Brisbane	0.2	2.0	0.1	1.7
Adelaide	1.6	3.1	0.8	0.4
Perth	0.1	0.8	0.2	0.5
Hobart	0.1	2.1	0.0	1.1
Weighted average of six State capitals	0.8	2.5	0.3	0.6
Darwin	— Not available —		-0.1	0.5
Canberra	0.4	2.4	0.1	0.1

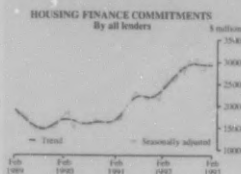
For further information, order the publications *Price Index of Materials Used in House Building, Six State Capital Cities and Canberra (6408.0)* and *Price Index of Materials Used in Building Other Than House Building, Eight Capital Cities (6407.0)*, or contact Mark Dickson (06) 252 6198.

Tracking South Australia's economy

The recently issued *South Australian Economic Indicators* is a new monthly publication which provides regular up-to-date information on the performance of the South Australian economy. Commentary, including graphic and tabular presentation of selected indicators, has been provided to assist readers in their analysis of economic trends in the State.

The presentation of comparative Australian data enables the South Australian statistical information to be measured against national aggregates. Time series information has been included to provide an historical perspective on many of the selected indicators.

For further information, order the publication *South Australian Economic Indicators (1307.4)*, or contact Brian Moody on (08) 237 7315.



Home lending down but may be levelling out

The provisional trend estimate for the number of dwelling units financed for owner occupation in February 1993 decreased by 0.3 per cent over the January estimate, but remained 13.7 per cent above the estimate for February 1992. While the trend downwards has continued since a peak in the series in August 1992, the recent indications are that the series may be levelling out.

The overall decrease in the trend estimate for February was not general across the three housing lending categories.

The provisional trend estimate for the number of dwelling units to be constructed increased by 0.5 per cent continuing the upward trend which began in November 1991.

On the other hand the downward trend in the number of newly erected dwellings financed continues the sustained fall begun in July 1992. To reverse this downward trend next month, the seasonally adjusted estimate for March 1993 would have to increase by at least 11 per cent.

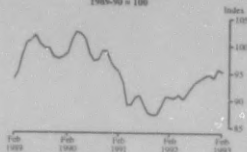
The trend estimate for the purchase of established dwellings fell by just 0.4 per cent in February and the indications are that this series may be levelling out.

The seasonally adjusted estimate for the number of dwelling units financed in February 1993 decreased by 1.9 per cent over January 1993. By way of contrast the corresponding original figures recorded an increase of 23.3 per cent.

HOUSING FINANCE
FEBRUARY 1993
Number of dwellings

	Established dwellings	Construction of dwellings	Newly erected dwellings	Total
% change from January 1993				
Trend	-0.4	0.5	-2.1	-0.3
Seasonally adjusted	-0.1	-6.1	-11.6	-1.9
Unadjusted	24.0	22.5	14.0	23.3
% change from February 1992				
Trend	13.9	19.1	-10.3	13.7
Seasonally adjusted	13.5	19.9	-12.7	13.4
Unadjusted	13.5	21.2	-12.2	13.6

For further information, order the publication *Housing Finance for Owner Occupation, Australia* (5609.0), or contact Mark Dennis on (06) 252 7117.

EXPORT PRICES
1989=100

Fall in export prices

The Export Price Index fell 0.5 per cent between January and February 1993.

Price decreases were recorded for about half the items in the index. The most significant decreases were for wool, gold and iron ores and concentrates.

These decreases were partly offset by small price increases for about one-third of the items in the index, the most significant being for beef.

Between February 1992 and February 1993 the Export Price Index increased by 5.2 per cent.

EXPORT PRICES, FEBRUARY 1993
Percentage change

Commodity group	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Vegetable products	-0.2	13.0
Prepared food stuffs	1.3	10.8
Live animals and animal products	1.9	9.6
Mineral products	-0.5	7.2
Motor vehicles, aircraft and vessels	1.8	4.8
Base metals and articles of base metals	-1.5	3.8
Gold, diamonds and coin	-1.6	3.5
Machinery and mechanical appliances	-0.7	3.1
Products of chemicals and allied industries	-0.2	3.0
Wool and cotton fibres	-2.5	-9.0
All groups	-0.5	5.2

For further information, order the publication *Export Price Index, Australia* (6405.0), or contact Peter Cordy on (06) 252 5541.

Young people profiled

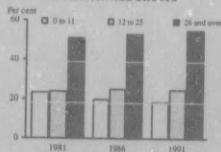
There were 71,043 people aged 12 to 25 years in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) on Census night, 6 August 1991. These young people made up 25 per cent of the total population of the Territory. The numbers of young males and females were almost even at 35,700 and 35,300 respectively.

The just-published booklet *The Australian Capital Territory's Young People* is the second in a series, covering all States and Territories and the national picture, to be produced by the Australian Bureau of Statistics under commission from the National Youth Affairs Research Scheme.

Among other features from the ACT publication, almost one third of the population of young people had moved to the ACT from a State or from overseas.

Continued ...

POPULATION AGE GROUPS



The proportion of young persons born overseas was 15 per cent. The most common non-English speaking birthplace was Vietnam, accounting for 6 per cent of the young overseas-born population.

The language (other than English) most commonly spoken at home was Croatian, spoken by 1,056 young people.

MAIN LANGUAGES SPOKEN AT HOME
OTHER THAN ENGLISH
12 to 25 year-olds

Language	Total	Per cent
Croatian	1,056	10.0
Greek	962	9.1
Italian	960	9.1
Cantonese	682	6.5
Spanish	639	6.1
Vietnamese	514	4.9
Other and not stated	5,698	54.0
Total	10,511	100.0

The majority of 12 to 25 year-olds (62%) were attending an educational institution and 59 per cent were reported to be living at home with at least one parent.

For further information, order the publication *The Australian Capital Territory's Young People* (4123.8) or contact Jeff Carlton on (09) 323 5374 or Bill Syms on (06) 207 0285.

This week in brief ...

❑ Overseas arrivals and departures

The total number of overseas movements in January 1993 was 1,002,500, 13 per cent more than in January 1992 (884,600) and the highest number of movements ever recorded in one month, surpassing the December 1992 figure of 972,900. There were 538,200 arrivals (13% more than in January 1992) and 464,400 departures (14% more than in January 1992).

Source: *Overseas Arrivals and Departures, Australia, January 1993* (3401.0).

❑ Commercial finance

Commercial finance commitments made by significant lenders in February 1993 totalled \$5,263.7 million, an increase of \$643.6 million (13.9%) on January 1993 and an increase of \$188.3 million (3.7%) on February 1992. Money market corporations were the only type of lender to record a decrease in February 1993, down \$247.8 million (41.3%); banks increased by \$760.9 million (21.6%), finance companies were up \$73.5 million (20.9%) and other lenders were up \$57.0 million (39.4%).

Source: *Commercial Finance, Australia, February 1993* (5643.0).

❑ Personal finance

Personal finance commitments for February 1993 totalled \$1,478.2 million, an increase of \$129.4 million (9.6%) over January 1993 but a decrease of \$26.7 million (1.8%) compared with February 1992.

Source: *Personal Finance, Australia, February 1993* (5642.0).

Inquiries

The ABS supplies a wide range of statistical information:

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Editor

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Statistics Weekly
22 April 1993

Order from the following:

Expected releases over the fortnight to 4 May

April

- 21 Price Indexes of Articles Produced by Manufacturing Industry, Australia, February 1993 (6412.0; \$10.70)
Registrations of New Motor Vehicles, Australia, March 1993, Preliminary (9301.0; \$10.70)
- 22 Price Indexes of Materials Used in Manufacturing Industries, Australia, February 1993 (6411.0; \$10.70)
Import Price Index, Australia, February 1993 (6414.0; \$8.20)
- 28 Consumer Price Index, March Quarter 1993 (6401.0; \$11.70)
Manufacturing Production, Australia, March 1993, Preliminary (8301.0; \$10.70)

Selected releases: 7 to 20 April

General

Catalogue of Publications and Products, 1993 (1101.0; \$4.00)
Monthly Summary of Statistics, Aust., April 1993 (1304.0; \$20.40)
A Guide to Interpreting Time Series — Monitoring "Trends", an Overview, 1993 (1348.0; free) — *new issue*
Measuring Aust.'s Economy, A Student's Guide, 1993 (1360.0; \$14.50) — *new issue*
Victorian Year Book, 1993 (1300.2; \$37.70) (hard cover)
Economic Indicators, Qld, April 1993 (1307.3; \$6.50)
Cause of Death Certification, April 1993 (1205.5; \$7.50) — *new issue*
South Aust. at a Glance, 1993 (1306.4; \$1.00)

Demography

Overseas Arrivals and Departures, Aust., January 1993 (3401.0; \$6.60)
Deaths, WA, 1991 (3312.5; \$14.80)
Estimated Resident Population in Statistical Local Areas, SA, June 1992, Preliminary (3201.4; \$10.70)

National accounts, finance and foreign trade

Foreign Trade, Aust.: Merchandise Imports, February 1993 (5433.0; \$9.30)
Personal Finance, Aust., February 1993 (5642.0; \$6.10)
Commercial Finance, Aust., February 1993 (5643.0; \$6.10)

Labour statistics and prices

Employed Wage and Salary Earners, Aust., September Qtr 1993 (6248.0; \$16.30)
Industrial Disputes, Aust., December 1992 (6321.0; \$10.70)
Price Indexes of Copper Materials, Aust., March 1993 (6410.0; \$5.60)
Price Indexes of Materials Used in Coal Mining, Aust., February 1993 (6415.0; \$10.70)

Agriculture

Agriculture, WA, 1991-92 (7113.5; \$14.60)

Manufacturing, Mining, Energy, Service Industries, Building and Construction

Sales of Australian Wine and Brandy by Winemakers, February 1993 (8504.0; \$10.70)
Building Activity, Aust., December Qtr 1992 (8752.0; \$14.30)
Tourist Accommodation, Qld, December Qtr 1992 (8635.3; \$20.00)
Dwelling Unit Commencements Reported by Approving Authorities, Qld, December 1992 (8741.3; \$10.70)
Tourist Accommodation, WA, December Qtr 1992 (8635.5; \$20.00)
Building Approvals Private Sector, Perth Statistical Division, March 1993 (8732.5; \$5.00)

Key national indicators	Period	Units	Latest figure available		Percentage change (a) on	
			Original	Seasonally adjusted	Previous period	Corresponding period last year
National accounts						
Gross domestic product (GDP)(A) at 1989-90 prices (e)	Dec. qtr 92	\$m	n.a.	93,598	0.7	2.5
International accounts						
Balance on current account (b)	Feb. 93	\$m	-660	-791	76	4
Balance on merchandise trade (b)	"	"	207	365	-45	29
Balance on goods and services (b)	"	"	352	198	-64	27
Merchandise exports	"	"	4,637	5,053	-3	13
Merchandise imports	"	"	-4,430	-4,688	3	12
Net foreign debt	31 Dec. 92	\$m	168,251	n.a.	2.7	16.1
Net foreign liabilities	"	"	213,744	n.a.	2.6	13.1
Consumption and investment						
Retail turnover at current prices	Feb. 93	\$m	7,102	8,114	-0.1	4.1
New capital expenditure at 1989-90 prices	Dec. qtr 92	"	6,524	6,008	9.2	5.6
New motor vehicle registrations (d)	Feb. 93	no.	39,885	43,542	-2.3	-1.7
Production						
Manufacturers' sales at 1989-90 prices	Dec. qtr 92	\$m	34,960	33,470	2.7	2.2
Dwelling unit approvals	Feb. 93	no.	13,043	14,330	-4.5	19.4
Building approvals	"	\$m	1,826	2,124	-11.9	21.0
Building work done at 1989-90 prices	Dec. qtr 92	"	6,391	6,086	2.0	6.1
Prices						
Consumer price index	Dec. qtr 92	1989-90 = 100.0	107.9	n.a.	0.5	0.3
Articles produced by manufacturing industry (d)	Jan. 93	1988-89 = 100.0	114.5	n.a.	0.4	2.6
Materials used in manufacturing industries (c)	Jan. 93	1984-85 = 100.0	126.7	n.a.	-0.2	4.8
Labour force and demography						
Employed persons	Mar. 93	'000	7,730.1	7,727.3	0.9	0.4
Participation rate †	"	%	63.0	62.7	0.3	-0.4
Unemployment rate †	"	"	11.3	10.9	-0.2	0.4
Job vacancies	Feb. 93	'000	29.8	28.9	-4.4	8.3
Average weekly overtime per employee	"	hours	1.14	1.16	3.0	3.8
Estimated resident population at end of qtr	Sept. 92	million	17.6	n.a.	0.3	1.3
Short-term overseas visitor arrivals	Jan. 93	'000	243	239	7.7	19.7
Incomes						
Company profits before income tax	Dec. qtr 92	\$m	4,853	3,728	-10.2	25.1
Average weekly earnings, full-time adults, ordinary time	Nov. 92	\$	586.90	n.a.	0.2	1.4
Financial markets						
Interest rates (c) (monthly average)						
90-day bank bills †	Feb. 93	% per annum	5.80	n.a.	-0.05	-1.70
10-year Treasury bonds †	Nov. 92	"	8.00	n.a.	0.60	-2.05
Exchange rate — \$US	Feb. 93	per SA	0.6812	n.a.	1	-9

(a) Based on seasonally adjusted figures where available. (b) For percentage changes, a minus sign indicates an increase in the deficit; no sign means a decrease in the deficit or an increase in the surplus. (c) Source: Reserve Bank of Australia. (d) Later figures expected to be released Wednesday, 21 April 1993. (e) Later figures expected to be released Thursday, 22 April 1993.

NOTES: † = change is shown in terms of percentage points. n.a. = not available.

Percentage change from same period previous year

Key State indicators

	Period	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
New capital expenditure*	Sept. qtr 92	-15.9	-15.2	2.9	-29.3	0.3	-18.8	n.a.	n.a.	-10.6
Retail turnover (trend estimate)	Feb. 93	0.7	2.8	6.8	-0.8	8.7	6.0	n.a.	7.0	3.5
New motor vehicle registrations†	Feb. 93	2.8	-10.2	0.5	-10.5	5.7	-17.0	1.1	9.1	-1.7
Number of dwelling unit approvals*	Feb. 93	29.4	15.7	-2.6	51.7	20.2	-27.8	-37.8	-0.6	19.4
Value of total building work done	Dec. qtr 92	0.7	-1.2	15.8	15.2	16.4	13.1	-9.5	-0.5	5.6
Employed persons*	Mar. 93	-2.9	0.6	3.5	0.4	5.1	-0.1	-5.5	4.9	0.3
Capital city consumer price index	Dec. qtr 92	0.3	-0.2	0.7	1.7	0.0	0.6	0.9	1.0	0.3
Average weekly earnings (full-time adult ordinary time)	Nov. 92	0.9	1.2	1.4	3.4	1.2	3.2	5.9	1.7	1.4
Population	Sept. 92	1.1	0.8	2.5	0.7	1.6	0.8	1.0	2.3	1.3
Room nights in licensed hotels and motels, etc.	Sept. qtr 92	3.9	2.5	3.7	0.2	2.0	-0.7	-0.7	1.7	2.9

* Seasonally adjusted except for NT and ACT. † Seasonally adjusted except for Tas, NT and ACT.

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